

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 341

To provide economic disaster assistance to producers of the 2002 crop of rice in the State of Louisiana.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 27, 2003

Mr. JOHN (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To provide economic disaster assistance to producers of the
2002 crop of rice in the State of Louisiana.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Louisiana Rice Eco-
5 nomic Relief Act of 2003”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The rice industry in the State of Louisiana
9 contributes significantly to the economy of that
10 State and the United States, with an estimated an-

1 nual value of approximately \$250,000,000 and an
2 estimated average annual economic benefit of ap-
3 proximately \$1,000,000,000.

4 (2) For the 2002 crop of rice, rice producers in
5 the State of Louisiana suffered from the lowest rice
6 prices in more than 50 years.

7 (3) Since most of the 2002 crop of rice in the
8 State of Louisiana was sold during the harvest sea-
9 son, the market-derived income of producers from
10 the sale of rice fell to record low levels.

11 (4) The historically-low income of producers
12 from the sale of rice in the State of Louisiana, even
13 when combined with Federal income support, still is
14 devastating to—

15 (A) rice producers in the State;

16 (B) the rice industry infrastructure of the
17 State;

18 (C) businesses that serve and depend on
19 the rice industry; and

20 (D) communities in which rice producers
21 and their families reside and in which the rice
22 industry operates.

23 (5) Because of the significant reduction in total
24 income and the current costs of production, many
25 rice producers of the State of Louisiana will not

1 cover the total expenses they incurred to produce
2 and harvest the 2002 crop.

3 (6) The historically-low prices of the 2002 crop
4 of rice in the State of Louisiana have contributed to
5 a combined market price and Federal support in-
6 come level that is approximately \$2.42 per hundred-
7 weight less than the average combined market price
8 and Federal support income levels during the 1998
9 through 2001 period, which is approximately 22 per-
10 cent below the average income level for the State for
11 the same time period.

12 (7) Due to the historically-low rice prices and
13 reduced income, rice producers in the State of Lou-
14 isiana and their families are faced with dire eco-
15 nomic circumstances that are crippling them and the
16 communities in which they live and work.

17 **SEC. 3. ECONOMIC DISASTER ASSISTANCE FOR LOUISIANA**
18 **RICE PRODUCERS.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall
20 use such sums as are necessary of funds of the Commodity
21 Credit Corporation to make payments, as soon as prac-
22 ticable after the date of enactment of this Act, to pro-
23 ducers of the 2002 crop of rice on farms located in the
24 State of Louisiana, to assist producers as a result of the

1 disastrous economic conditions occurring with the 2002
2 crop of rice.

3 (b) AMOUNT.—The amount of a payment made to
4 producers on a farm under this section shall be equal to
5 the product obtained by multiplying—

6 (1) the actual quantity of rice produced by the
7 producers on the farm during the 2002 crop year;
8 and

9 (2) a payment rate of \$2.42 per hundredweight.

10 (c) PAYMENT LIMITATION.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The total amount of pay-
12 ments that a person shall be entitled to receive
13 under this section may not exceed \$40,000.

14 (2) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall pro-
15 mulgate regulations defining the term “person” for
16 the purposes of paragraph (1), which shall conform,
17 to the maximum extent practicable, to the regula-
18 tions defining the term “person” promulgated under
19 section 1001 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7
20 U.S.C. 1308). The Secretary also shall promulgate
21 such additional regulations as the Secretary deter-
22 mines necessary to ensure a fair and reasonable ap-
23 plication of the limitation established under such
24 paragraph.

1 (d) INFORMATION.—In carrying out this section, the
2 Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable—

3 (1) use information that the Secretary has ob-
4 tained from administering other provisions of law;
5 and

6 (2) minimize any additional information or re-
7 quirements that are imposed on eligible producers.

8 (e) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFSET.—Payments under this
9 section shall not be subject to administrative offset, in-
10 cluding administrative offset under chapter 37 of title 31,
11 United States Code, or the Commodity Credit Corporation
12 Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714 et seq.).

13 **SEC. 4. COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION.**

14 The Secretary shall use the funds, facilities, and au-
15 thorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry
16 out this Act.

17 **SEC. 5. REGULATIONS.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may promulgate
19 such regulations as are necessary to implement this Act.

20 (b) PROCEDURE.—The promulgation of the regula-
21 tions and administration of this Act shall be made without
22 regard to—

23 (1) the notice and comment provisions of sec-
24 tion 553 of title 5, United States Code;

1 (2) the Statement of Policy of the Secretary of
 2 Agriculture effective July 24, 1971 (36 Fed. Reg.
 3 13804), relating to notices of proposed rulemaking
 4 and public participation in rulemaking; and

5 (3) chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code
 6 (commonly known as the “Paperwork Reduction
 7 Act”).

8 (c) CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF AGENCY RULE-
 9 MAKING.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall
 10 use the authority provided under section 808 of title 5,
 11 United States Code.

12 **SEC. 6. EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—The entire amount made available
 14 under this Act shall be available only to the extent that
 15 the President submits to Congress an official budget re-
 16 quest for a specific dollar amount that includes designa-
 17 tion of the entire amount of the request as an emergency
 18 requirement for the purposes of the Balanced Budget and
 19 Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900 et
 20 seq.).

21 (b) DESIGNATION.—The entire amount made avail-
 22 able under this section is designated by Congress as an
 23 emergency requirement under sections 251(b)(2)(A) and
 24 252(e) of that Act (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A), 902(e)).

○